## The Rules of Bocce

Bocce is also known as Boule and Petanque. Being a traditional pub game without any national or international governing body, variations of equipment and rules abound. These rules are comprehensive instructions for friendly play. They are not a complete set of standard regulations encompassing all situations that might be encountered. If in doubt, players should always abide by locally-played or house rules.

## **Description**

The surface of a Bocce court can be of any material, but thin gravel or sand is most appropriate.

Each bocce is made of metal, wood, or plastic and is between 2.5" to 4.5" in diameter, weighing about 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds. In singles, each player has four bocces; in doubles, each player has two bocces. The jack is a small wooden ball around 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter.

## **Play**

To begin, players decide who goes first. After the first frame, the player who threw the closest bocce in the previous frame starts the next frame from the position of the jack.

The player who starts the frame must first draw a circle around her feet with a diameter of between 14 and 20 inches. All players must keep both feet on the ground and within this circle when throwing. The player then throws the jack, which must land between 20 and 30 feet away and be at least a foot away from any obstacle such as the edge of the court or a tree.

The nearest bocce to the jack is always called the "best bocce". Each player throws bocces until that player runs out of bocces or throws a bocce that is best bocce. Once a player achieves best bocce, the next player on the opposing team plays in the same way. When a player runs out of bocces, the next player in the same team

takes over. Note that the first player therefore always throws just one bocce before retiring from the throwing circle because the first bocce is automatically best bocce. When all the players in a team run out of bocces, the opposing team finishes the leg by playing all their remaining bocces in an effort to increase their score.

Scoring - the winner of the frame scores one point for each bocce that is closer to the target than the opponent's best bocce. The team that reaches 16 points first wins.

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